CURSE OF THE SPAWN

image
24
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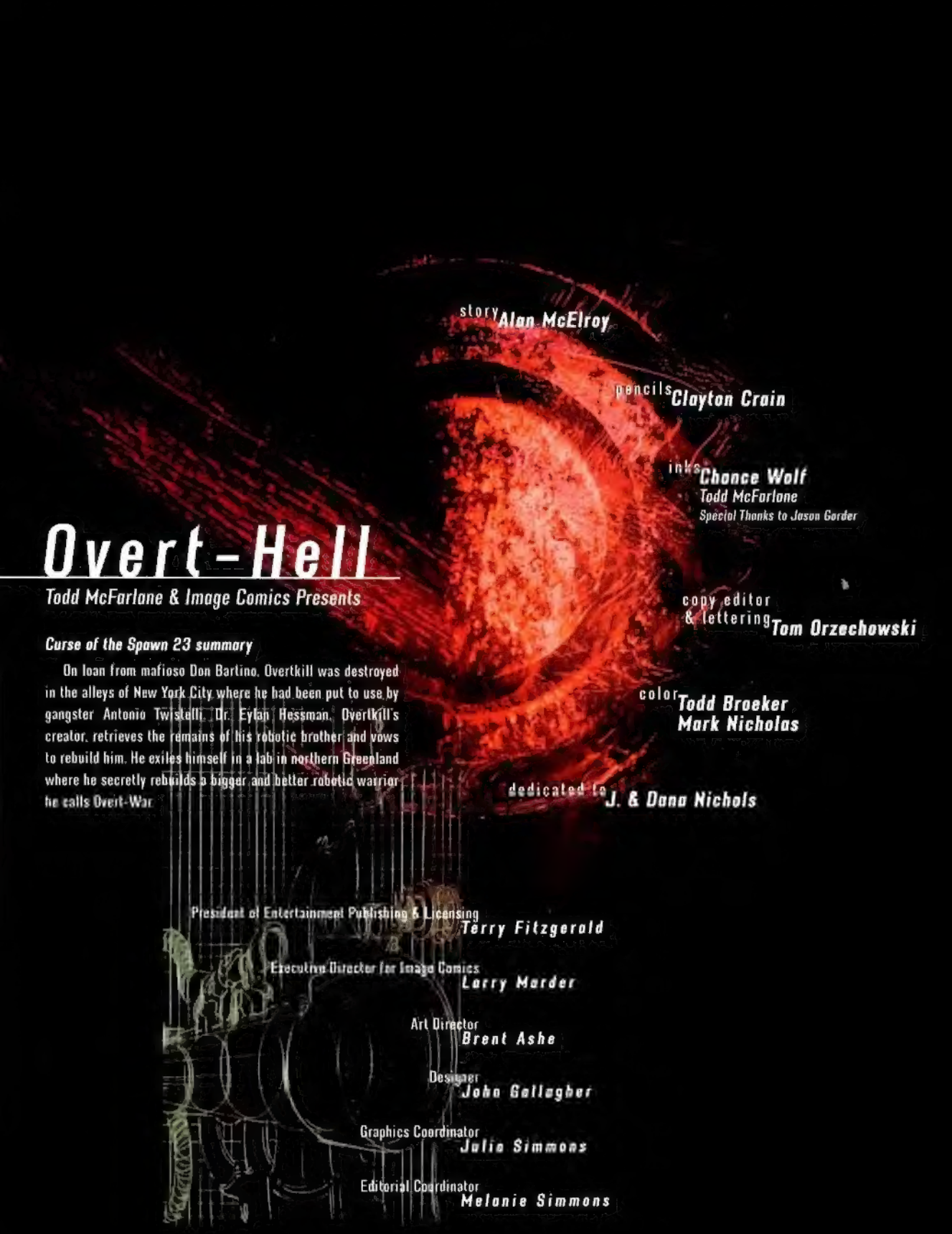

Overt-Hell

Todd McFarlane & Image Comics Presents

story Alan McElroy

pencils Clayton Crain

inks Chance Wolf
Todd McFarlane
Special Thanks to Jason Gorder

copy editor & lettering Tom Orzechowski

color Todd Broeker
Mark Nicholas

dedicated to J. & Dana Nichols

Curse of the Spawn 23 summary

On loan from mafioso Don Bartino, Overtkill was destroyed in the alleys of New York City where he had been put to use by gangster Antonio Twistelli. Dr. Eylan Hessman, Overtkill's creator, retrieves the remains of his robotic brother and vows to rebuild him. He exiles himself in a lab in northern Greenland where he secretly rebuilds a bigger and better robotic warrior he calls Overt-War.

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CURSE OF THE SPAWN®

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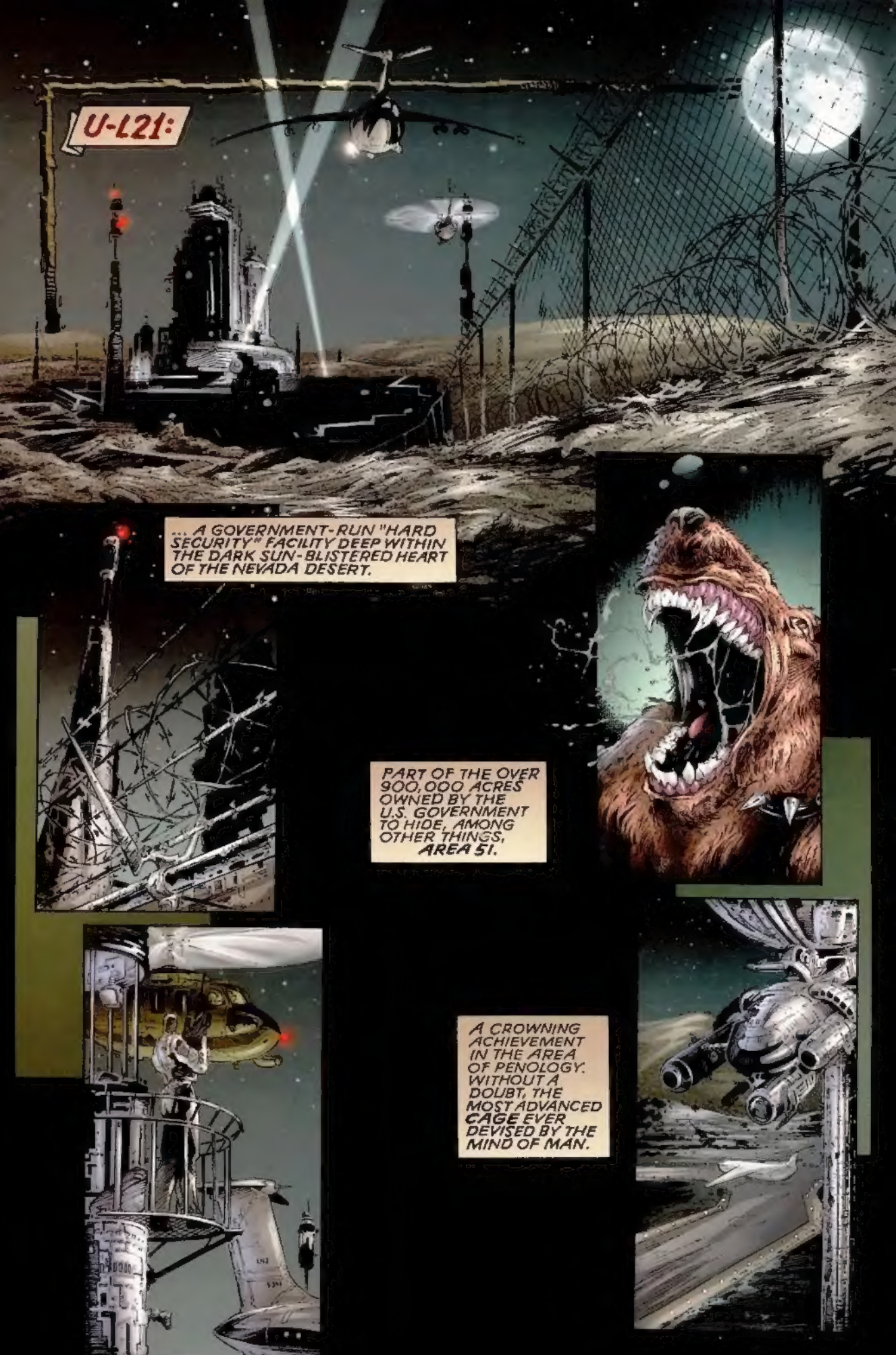
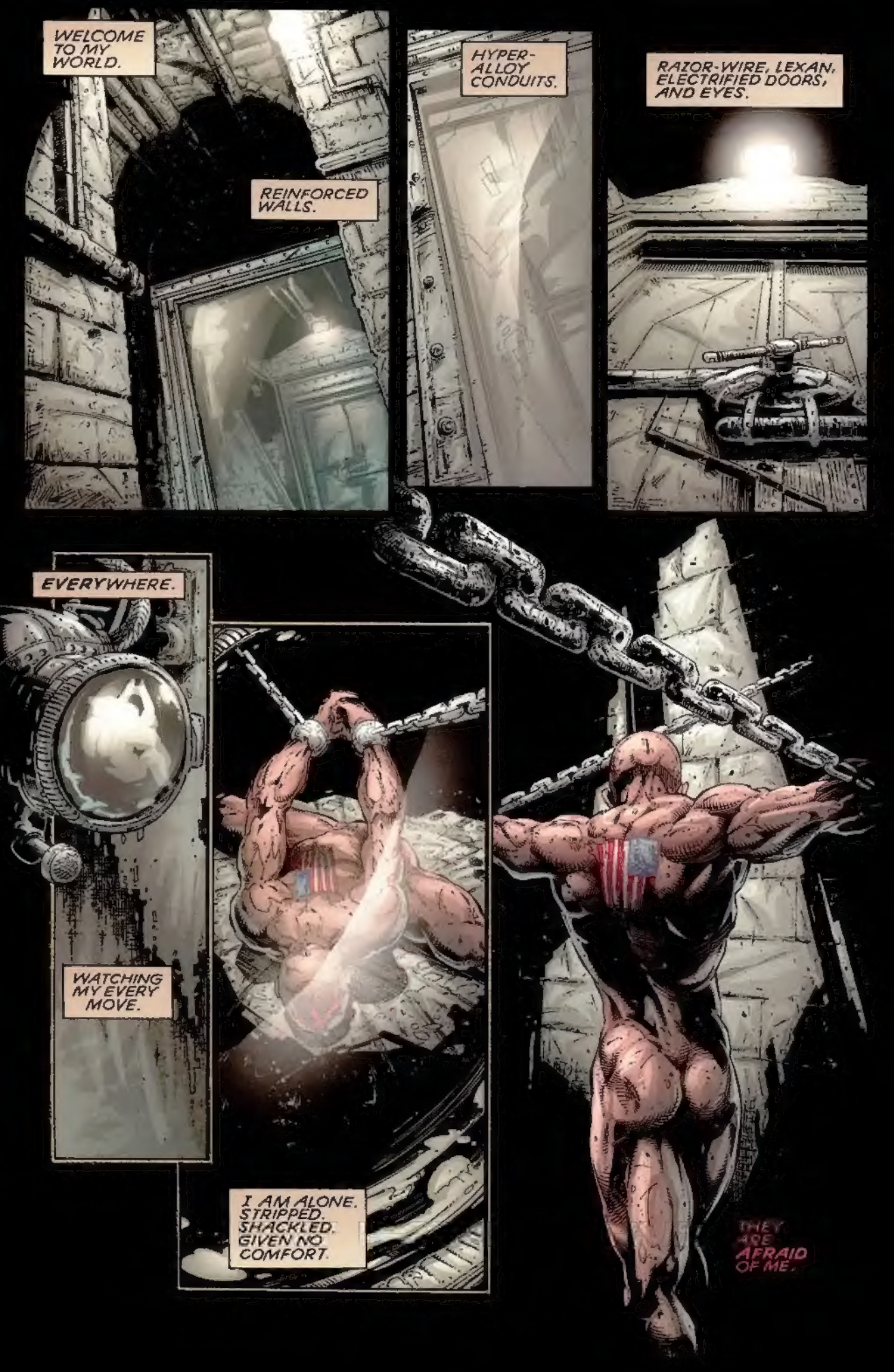
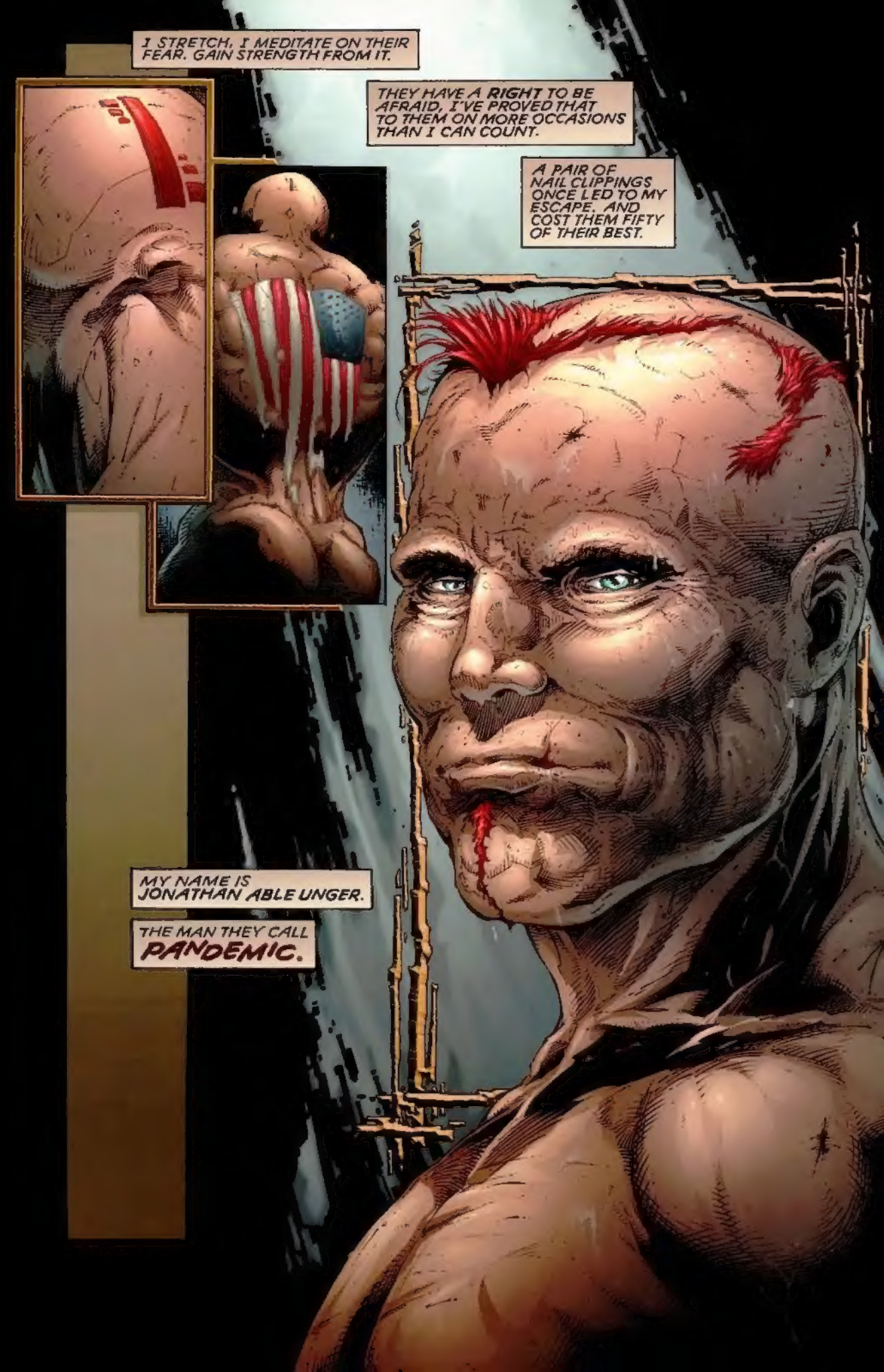
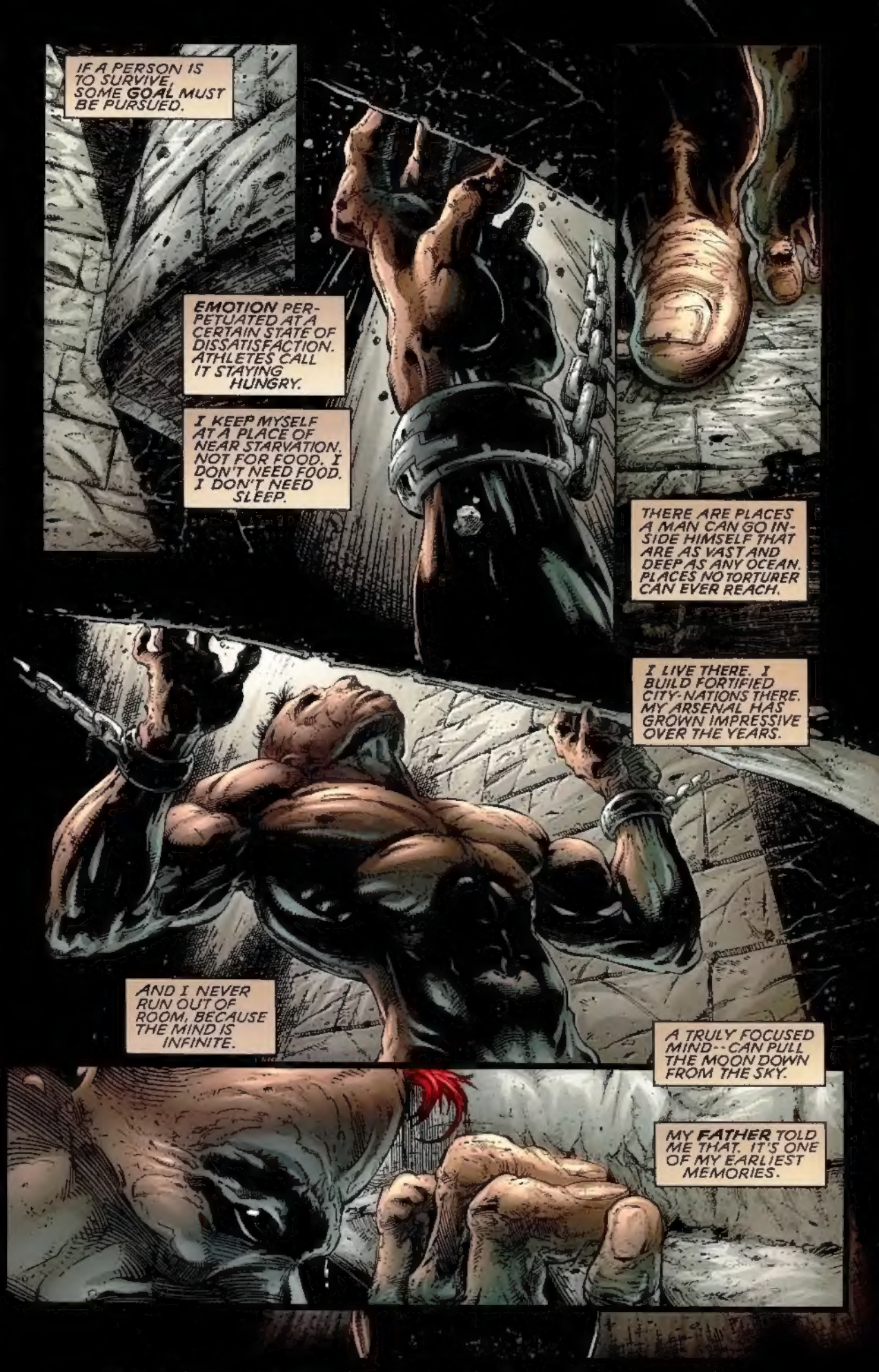

U-L21:
... A GOVERNMENT-RUN "HARD SECURITY" FACILITY DEEP WITHIN THE DARK SUN-BLISTERED HEART OF THE NEVADA DESERT.
PART OF THE OVER 900,000 ACRES OWNED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO HIDE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, AREA 51.
A CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT IN THE AREA OF PENOLOGY. WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE MOST ADVANCED CAGE EVER DEVISED BY THE MIND OF MAN.


WELCOME TO MY WORLD.
REINFORCED WALLS.
HYPER-ALLOY CONDUITS.
RAZOR-WIRE, LEXAN, ELECTRIFIED DOORS, AND EYES.
EVERYWHERE.
WATCHING MY EVERY MOVE.
I AM ALONE. STRIPPED. SHACKLED. GIVEN NO COMFORT.
THEY ARE AFRAID OF ME.


I STRETCH. I MEDITATE ON THEIR FEAR. GAIN STRENGTH FROM IT.
THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO BE AFRAID, I'VE PROVED THAT TO THEM ON MORE OCCASIONS THAN I CAN COUNT.
A PAIR OF NAIL CLIPPINGS ONCE LED TO MY ESCAPE. AND COST THEM FIFTY OF THEIR BEST.
MY NAME IS JONATHAN ABLE UNGER.
THE MAN THEY CALL PANDEMIC.


IF A PERSON IS TO SURVIVE, SOME GOAL MUST BE PURSUED.
EMOTION PERPETUATED AT A CERTAIN STATE OF DISSATISFACTION. ATHLETES CALL IT STAYING HUNGRY.
I KEEP MYSELF AT A PLACE OF NEAR STARVATION. NOT FOR FOOD. I DON'T NEED FOOD. I DON'T NEED SLEEP.
THERE ARE PLACES A MAN CAN GO INSIDE HIMSELF THAT ARE AS VAST AND DEEP AS ANY OCEAN. PLACES NO TORTURER CAN EVER REACH.
I LIVE THERE. I BUILD FORTIFIED CITY-NATIONS THERE. MY ARSENAL HAS GROWN IMPRESSIVE OVER THE YEARS.
AND I NEVER RUN OUT OF ROOM, BECAUSE THE MIND IS INFINITE.
A TRULY FOCUSED MIND--CAN PULL THE MOON DOWN FROM THE SKY.
MY FATHER TOLD ME THAT. IT'S ONE OF MY EARLIEST MEMORIES.

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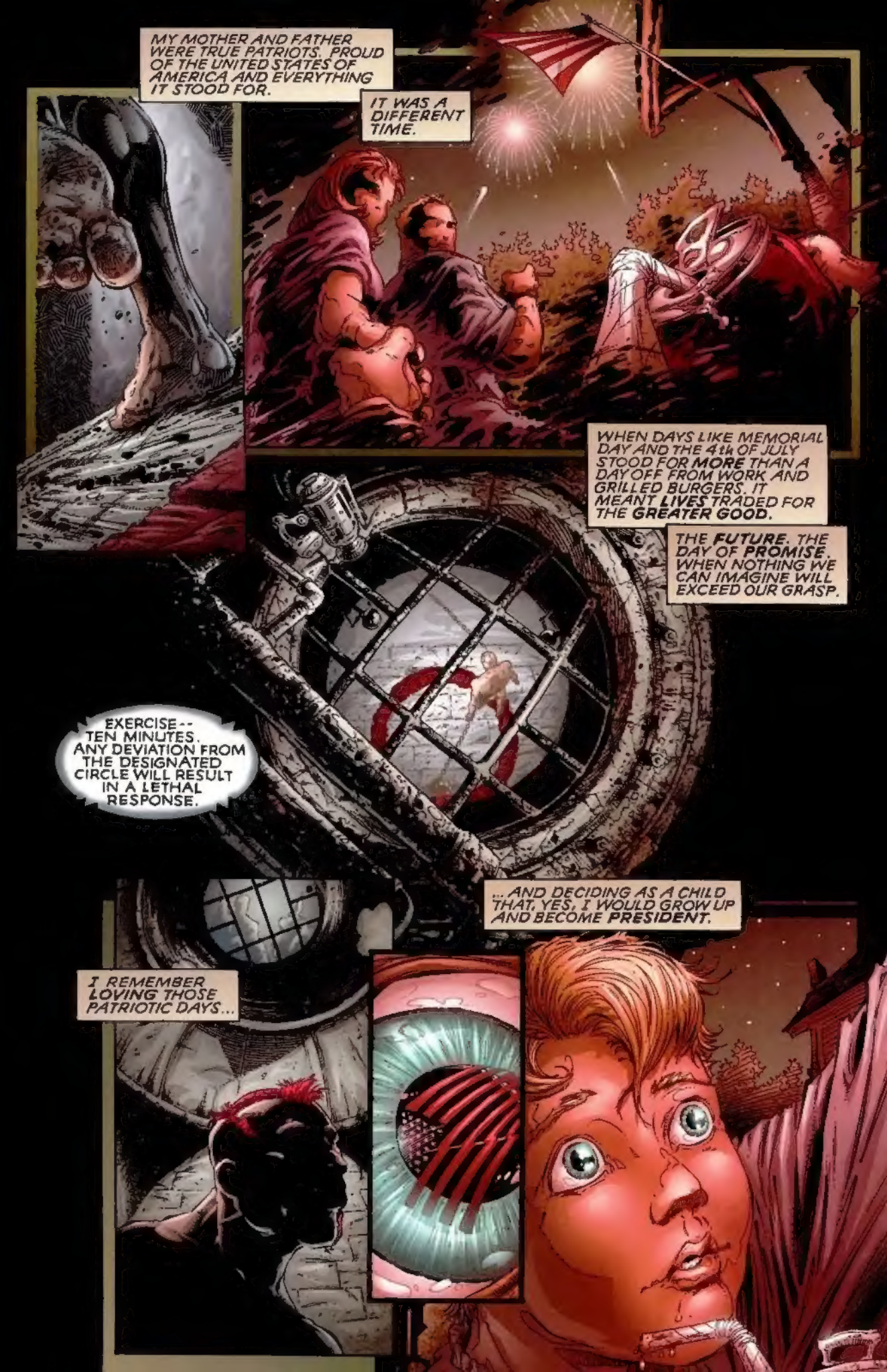
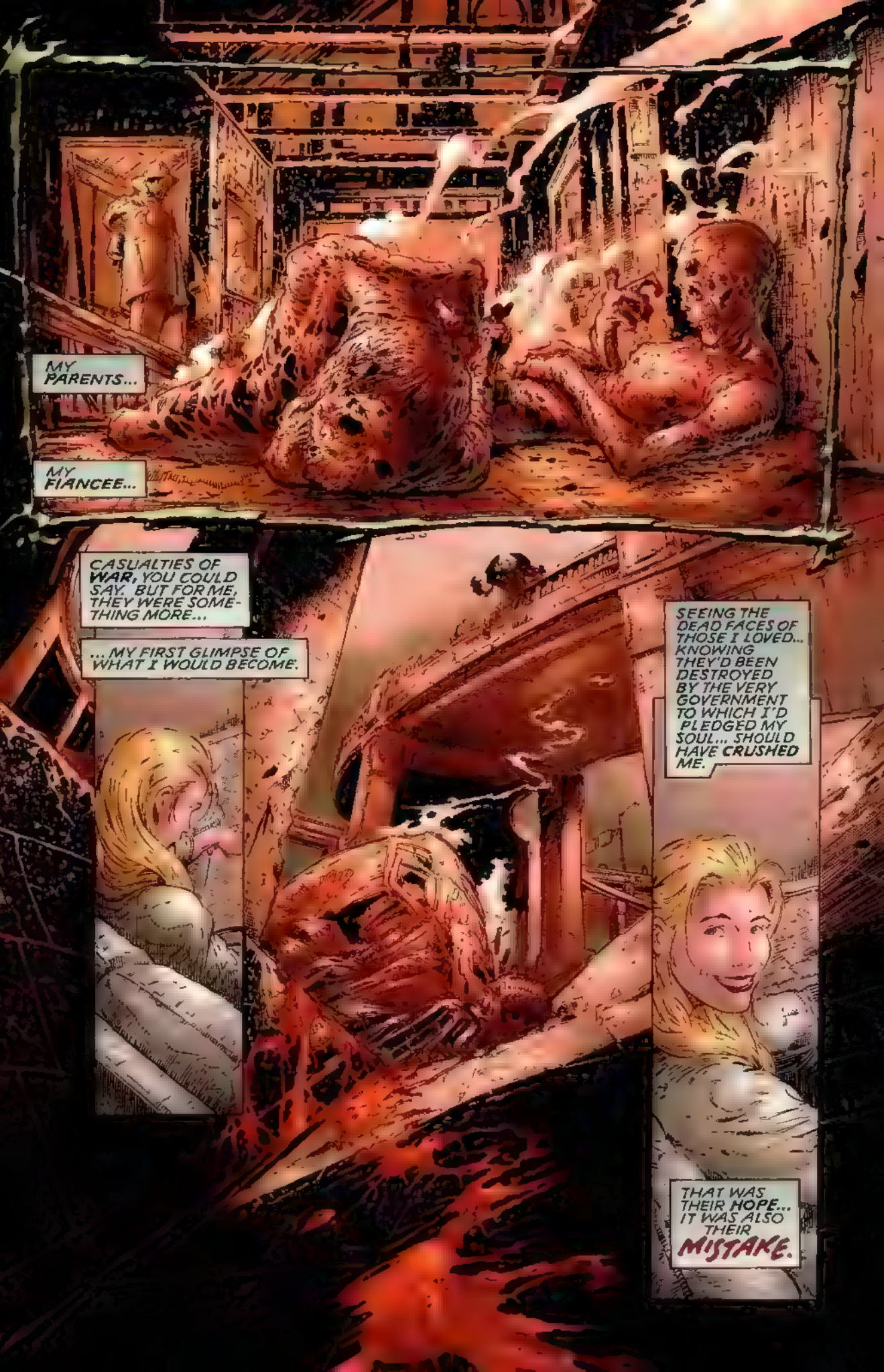

MY MOTHER AND FATHER WERE TRUE PATRIOTS. PROUD OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND EVERYTHING IT STOOD FOR.
IT WAS A DIFFERENT TIME.
WHEN DAYS LIKE MEMORIAL DAY AND THE 4th OF JULY STOOD FOR MORE THAN A DAY OFF FROM WORK AND GRILLED BURGERS. IT MEANT LIVES TRADED FOR THE GREATER GOOD.
THE FUTURE. THE DAY OF PROMISE. WHEN NOTHING WE CAN IMAGINE WILL EXCEED OUR GRASP.
EXERCISE -- TEN MINUTES. ANY DEVIATION FROM THE DESIGNATED CIRCLE WILL RESULT IN A LETHAL RESPONSE.
...AND DECIDING AS A CHILD THAT, YES, I WOULD GROW UP AND BECOME PRESIDENT.
I REMEMBER LOVING THOSE PATRIOTIC DAYS...

MY IDOLS WERE WASHINGTON, LINCOLN, TRUMAN, EISENHOWER AND KENNEDY. MEN OF HONOR. THE BEST MEN.
I WANTED TO BE AS THEY WERE. NOT FOR MYSELF... BUT FOR MY COUNTRY.
NOTHING MEANT MORE TO ME. TO OFFER THE SERVICE OF MY LIFE FOR THE ONE THING I TRULY BELIEVED IN, AND LOVED:
THE IDEAL OF AMERICA.
ONE NATION, UNDER GOD... INDIVISIBLE... WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL.
A GOAL. ALL I ASKED WAS TO BE A STEPPING STONE TOWARD MY COUNTRY'S INEVITABLE GREATNESS.
ONE DAY, I BELIEVED, THE WORLD WOULD HOLD THESE IDEALS, THESE TRUTHS, TO BE SELF-EVIDENT.

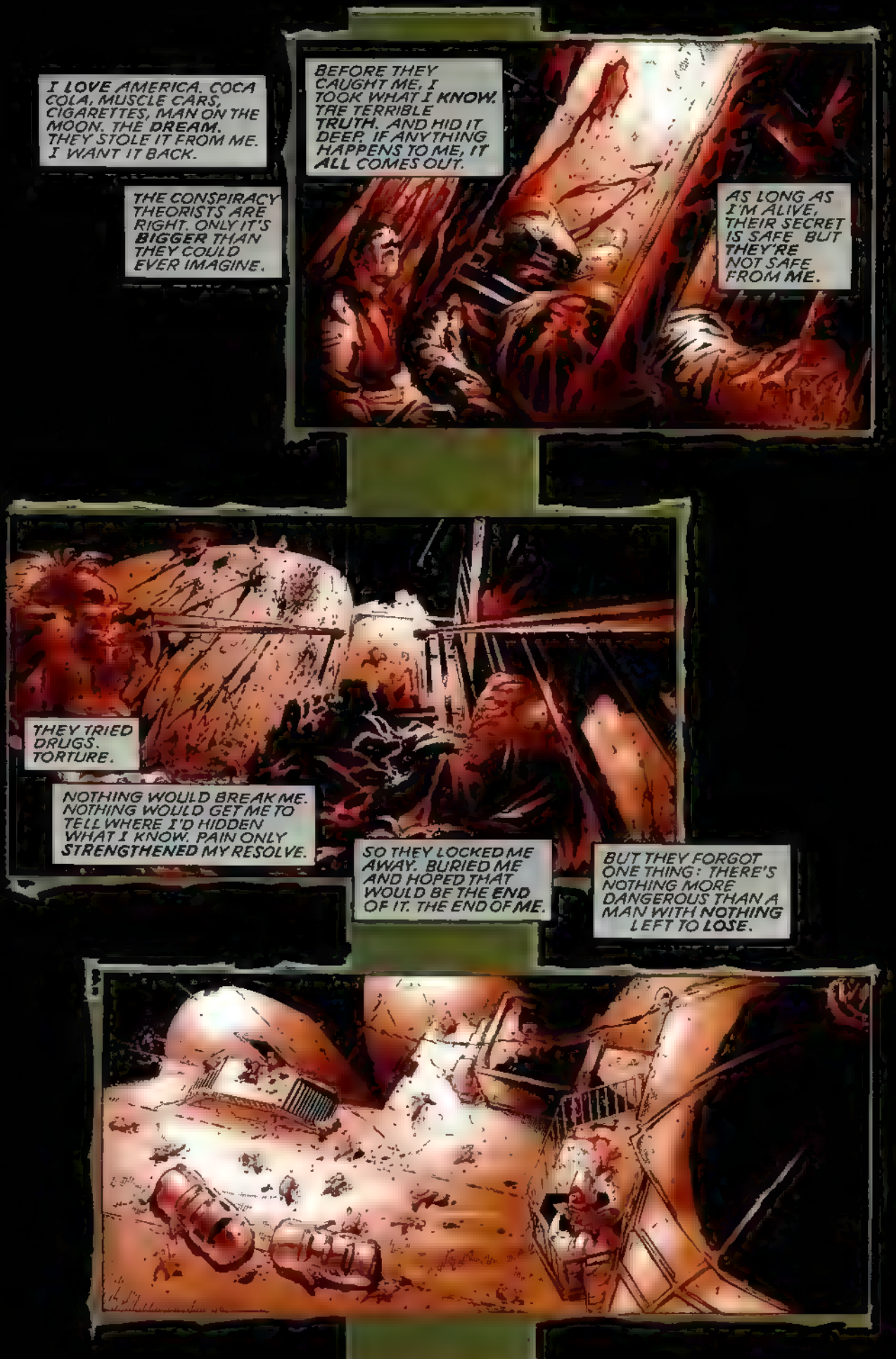
I JOINED THE U.S. NAVY, HONOR BOUND BY MY OWN CODE TO SERVE AS FORMER PRESIDENTS HAD SERVED.
I ROSE THROUGH THE RANKS. FROM ENLISTED SEAMAN... TO CAPTAIN OF MY OWN SHIP, THE BATTLESHIP U.S.S. MANHATTAN. THEY WERE GOOD YEARS FOR ME.
I GAVE MORE THAN I WAS ASKED, AND ASKED NONE TO GIVE MORE THAN I WOULD MYSELF.
AFTERWARDS, HOME WAS ALL THE SWEETER.
PROUD YEARS. THE MEN I SERVED UNDER AND COMMANDED WERE THE BEST I'VE EVER KNOWN.
STRENGTH FROM WITHIN.
WWHHH
CHA-CHUNK!
GLOP GLOP
THE BARS RETRACT, AND THE COLD GRUEL REMAINS.
IT STINKS OF THEIR FEAR. THAT ALONE IS MY NOURISHMENT.

THEN THE BLACK DAYS BEGAN.
A VISIT TO A V.A. HOSPITAL TO SEE ONE OF MY FORMER COMMANDERS OPENED MY EYES TO A SEWERFUL OF BURIED LIES... AND THE MEN WHO DROWN EVERY DAY IN THE VILE MURK.
GOOD MEN, GOOD SAILORS, GOOD SOLDIERS, USED AS FODDER AND LEFT TO ROT. I HEARD STORIES OF SECRET WARS. LIES FESTERING ATOP OTHER LIES.
I LEARNED THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT OUR GOVERNMENT. THAT THERE IS SOMETHING GREATER PUPPETEERING EVERYTHING WE SEE.
AND I WAS SICKENED. SHATTERED TO MY VERY MARROW.
SOMETHING HEINOUS WAS INFECTING OUR GREAT LAND... IT HAD TO BE STOPPED.
I CONFRONTED MY NAVAL SUPERIORS. SPOKE TO THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.
BUT I WAS SHOUTED DOWN AT EVERY TURN. EYES FILLED WITH HATE FOCUSED UPON ME.

I BECAME FRANTIC. THEY WERE ALL IN ON IT. THEY WERE ALL PART OF SOMETHING THAT HAD STARTED WITH KENNEDY'S MURDER. A BLIGHT THAT REACHED DEEP INTO THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF POWER.
MR. PRESIDENT! MR. PRESIDENT! YOU'VE GOTTA LISTEN TO ME!
PLEASE!
IT'S NOT TOO LATE!
GET HIM OUT OF MY SIGHT.
IT'S OKAY, MONICA
MY WORLD SHATTERED LIKE FINE CRYSTAL. EVERYTHING I HAD BELIEVED IN, STRIVEN FOR, WAS BEING SYSTEMATICALLY DESTROYED. HOLLOWED OUT FROM WITHIN.
BY THEN THEY'D HAD ENOUGH OF ME.
SO THEY STRUCK BACK, LASHING OUT WITH POISONED TALONS FROM THEIR BLACK WORLD.


MY PARENTS...
MY FIANCEE...
CASUALTIES OF WAR, YOU COULD SAY. BUT FOR ME, THEY WERE SOMETHING MORE...
... MY FIRST GLIMPSE OF WHAT I WOULD BECOME.
SEEING THE DEAD FACES OF THOSE I LOVED... KNOWING THEY'D BEEN DESTROYED BY THE VERY GOVERNMENT TO WHICH I'D PLEDGED MY SOUL... SHOULD HAVE CRUSHED ME.
THAT WAS THEIR HOPE... IT WAS ALSO THEIR MISTAKE.

I LOVE AMERICA. COCA COLA, MUSCLE CARS, CIGARETTES, MAN ON THE MOON. THE DREAM. THEY STOLE IT FROM ME. I WANT IT BACK.
BEFORE THEY CAUGHT ME, I TOOK WHAT I KNOW. THE TERRIBLE TRUTH. AND HID IT DEEP. IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO ME, IT ALL COMES OUT.
THE CONSPIRACY THEORISTS ARE RIGHT. ONLY IT'S BIGGER THAN THEY COULD EVER IMAGINE.
AS LONG AS I'M ALIVE, THEIR SECRET IS SAFE. BUT THEY'RE NOT SAFE FROM ME.
THEY TRIED DRUGS. TORTURE.
NOTHING WOULD BREAK ME. NOTHING WOULD GET ME TO TELL WHERE I'D HIDDEN WHAT I KNOW. PAIN ONLY STRENGTHENED MY RESOLVE.
SO THEY LOCKED ME AWAY. BURIED ME AND HOPED THAT WOULD BE THE END OF IT. THE END OF ME.
BUT THEY FORGOT ONE THING: THERE'S NOTHING MORE DANGEROUS THAN A MAN WITH NOTHING LEFT TO LOSE.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SO THEY LOCKED ME AWAY. BURIED ME AND HOPED THAT WOULD BE THE END OF IT. THE END OF ME.
BUT THEY FORGOT ONE THING: THERE'S NOTHING MORE DANGEROUS THAN A MAN WITH NOTHING LEFT TO LOSE.

AGAIN, I WAS CAUGHT. AND THIS TIME THEY BUILT A PRISON JUST FOR ME. ONE WAY IN. NO WAY OUT.
IT HELD ME FOR ALMOST FOUR MONTHS.
BEFORE I BLEW IT UP, PAINTING THE LANDSCAPE RED WITH THEIR BLOOD.
AGAIN, THEY TRACKED ME DOWN. THEY ARE MANY. THEY ARE RELENTLESS.
ANOTHER PRISON WAS BUILT. U-L21. THE STRONGEST YET. IT'S HELD ME FOR ALMOST A YEAR.
BUT I AM PATIENT. AND THEY ARE AFRAID.
ON MY FILE THEY'VE CODENAMED ME "PANDEMIC." BECAUSE WHAT I KNOW CAN DESTROY THEIR ENTIRE WORLD. A WORLD MADE OF LIES.

WATCH THE MONITOR.
HELLO, UNGER HAVING A GOOD DAY I TRUST.
NO?
I CAN MAKE IT BETTER FOR YOU
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO KILL THE MAN WHO MURDERED YOUR PARENTS AND YOUR FIANCEE, MELANIE?
OH, BY THE WAY, DID YOU KNOW SHE WAS FIVE WEEKS PREGNANT WHEN SHE DIED? A BOY. YOU COULD'VE NAMED HIM JOHN, Jr.
I CAN.
THE ASSASSIN IN QUESTION IS CODENAMED "OVERT-KILL". THIS IS A PLAY-BACK OF POOR MELANIE'S DEMISE.
IF YOU LISTEN CAREFULLY TO THE TAPE'S AUDIO YOU CAN ALMOST HEAR MELANIE SCREAMING.
CAN YOU HEAR IT, UNGER?

REMAIN PERFECTLY STILL ANY SUDDEN MOVEMENT WILL TRIGGER A LETHAL RESPONSE
STATIC RESTRAINTS SECURED
STAND BY FOR TRANSFER.
PRISONER 00001 SECURED FOR TRANSPORT.
SECURITY CUBE-LOCKS IN PLACE SECURITY 'RED' PROTOCOLS ACTIVE.
SERVO DETONATORS ARMED. LASER MONITORS ALIGNED.
ANY "RED" PROTOCOL BREACH WILL RESULT IN A ZERO-ZERO COUNTDOWN TO AUTO-DESTRUCT.

I AM ONE MAN. BUT. THROUGH ME, I IMAGINE THE HOPES AND DREAMS OF ALL MEN. LIFE, LIBERTY, THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS... AND LOVE.
I BURY THE PAIN, BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL, WITH IMAGES OF MY PARENTS. WAVING TINY AMERICAN FLAGS AS BOMBS BURST IN AIR ON EVERY 4th OF JULY.
I THINK OF MELANIE. HER SMILE, HER DRY WIT, HER INNER STRENGTH... HER TOUCH. WHAT A FINE FIRST LADY SHE'D'VE MADE. AND I THINK OF THE OFFICE... OVAL... AUSTERE... A PLACE WHERE ONE MAN CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
I WANT NOTHING ELSE BUT TO REMOVE THE STAIN OF LIES AND DECEIT FROM THE WHITE HOUSE. TO BURY THE MEN WHO'VE SPENT YEARS MURDERING THE TRUTH. SO MANY TRUTHS... SHATTERED, LOCKED AWAY.
MASTERS OF IMMORALITY HAVE TRAINED US TO SEE WHITE AS BLACK AND BLACK AS WHITE.
IT'S GONE ON LONG ENOUGH.

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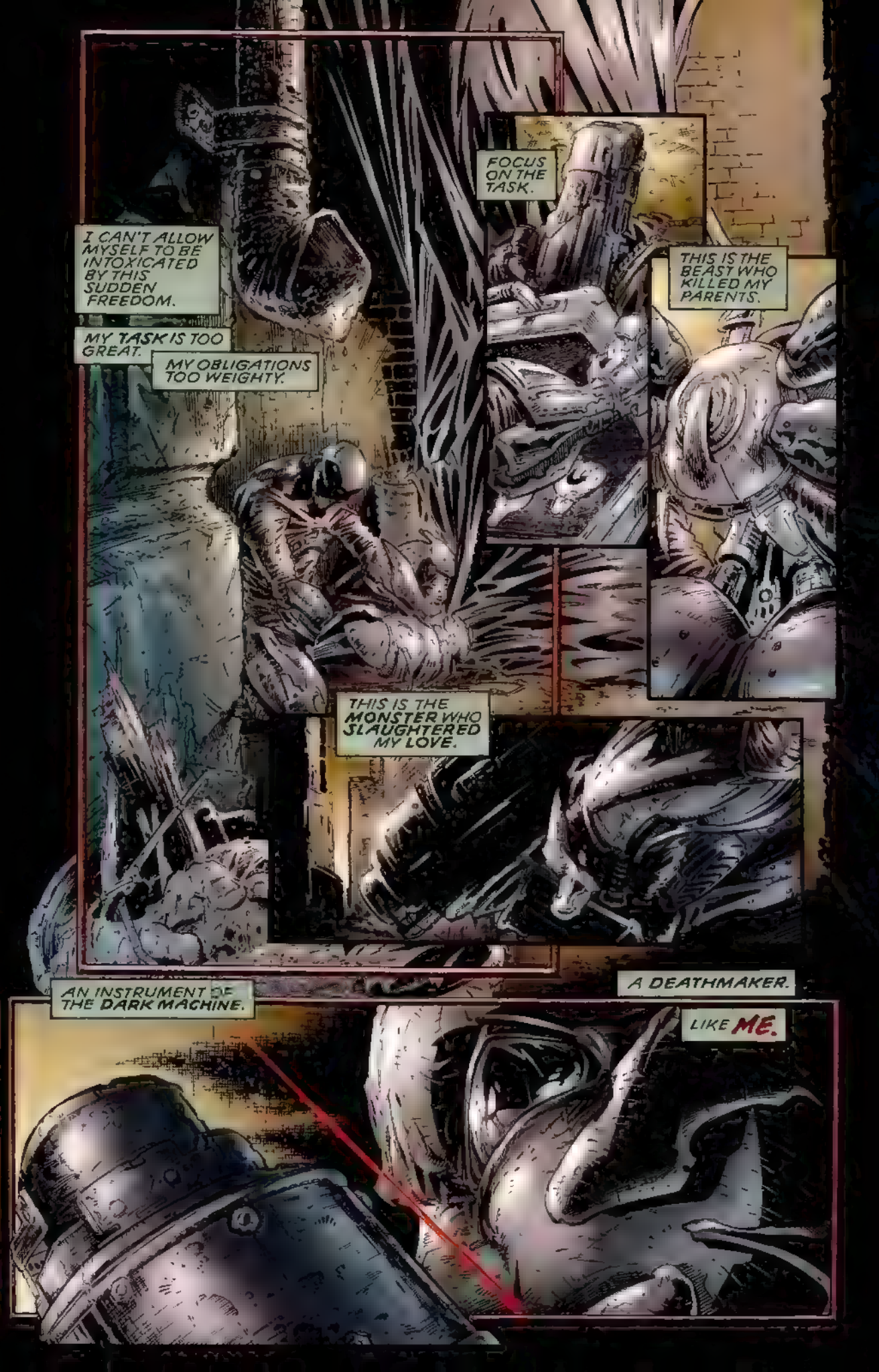
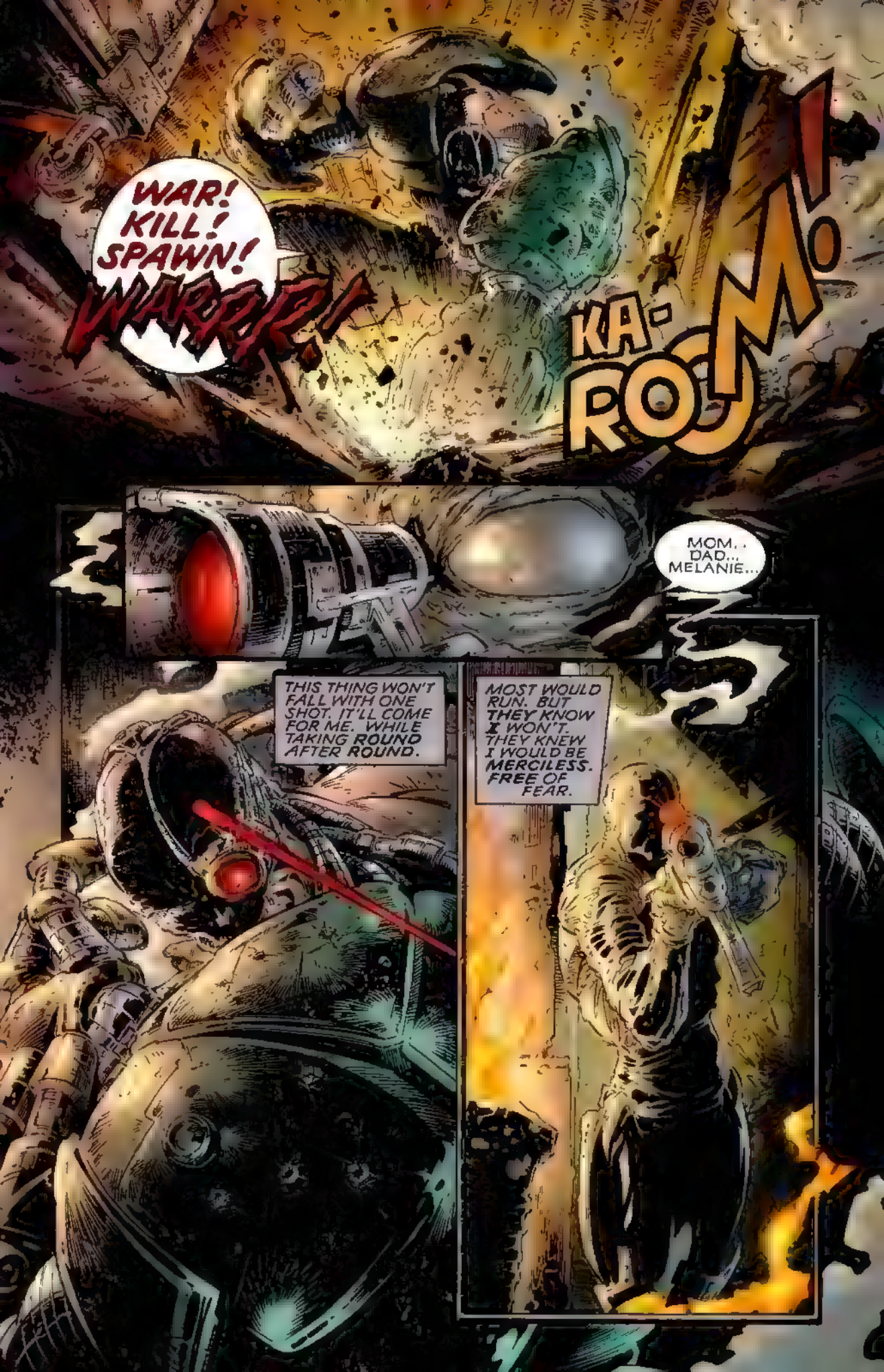
I MUST ACT.
NEW YORK CITY.
POLICE AND NATIONAL GUARD VEHICLES BURN IN THE WAKE OF SOMETHING RAGING AND UNSTOPPABLE.
SPAWN! KHHLL!
AN IMPRESSIVE PATCH OF LOWER MANHATTAN LIES IN RUIN.
MY FLYING JAIL DIPS LOW OVER THE CITY.
DROP THE PACKAGE.
THEN, MY FIRST SIGHT AS A FREE MAN IS BURNING HELL RUSHING UP TO MEET ME.


I CAN'T ALLOW MYSELF TO BE INTOXICATED BY THIS SUDDEN FREEDOM.
MY TASK IS TOO GREAT.
MY OBLIGATIONS TOO WEIGHTY.
FOCUS ON THE TASK.
THIS IS THE BEAST WHO KILLED MY PARENTS.
THIS IS THE MONSTER WHO SLAUGHTERED MY LOVE.
AN INSTRUMENT OF THE DARK MACHINE.
A DEATHMAKER.
LIKE ME.


WAR! KILL! SPAWN! WARRR!
KA-ROOM!
MOM.. DAD... MELANIE...
THIS THING WON'T FALL WITH ONE SHOT. IT'LL COME FOR ME. WHILE TAKING ROUND AFTER ROUND.
MOST WOULD RUN. BUT THEY KNOW I WON'T. THEY KNEW I WOULD BE MERCILESS. FREE OF FEAR.

KILL SPAWN!!
YES! HE DID THIS TO ME! MAKE ME KILL MY BROTHER!
WHERE?! TELL ME WHERE!
WELL, YOU'RE IN LUCK. I HAPPEN TO KNOW WHERE THIS "SPAWN" IS.
A HIGH SECURITY GOVERNMENT PRISON IN CENTRAL NEVADA
YOU WANT THIS GUY SPAWN?

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I LOVE MY COUNTRY.
I LOVE AMERICA. ITS PROMISE ITS DREAM.
I'M GONNA GET IT BACK.
SPAWN! SPAWWWN!
THIS MAN/MONSTER/ MACHINE WHO MURDERED MY PARENTS, MY LOVE, ISN'T TO BLAME. THE MEN WHO HIRED HIM ARE THE ONES THEY WILL BE MADE TO SUFFER.
AS I WATCH OVERT-KILL LAY WASTE TO U-121, I VOW TO NEVER BE CAUGHT AGAIN. I WILL BECOME WHAT THEY'VE NAMED ME. I WILL BECOME PANDEMIC.
AND, WITH EVERY FIBRE OF MY BEING, MY HEART, MY SOUL, I PROMISE TO BRING THEIR DARK WORLD OF LIES TO ITS KNEES...

BlahBlahBlah

BlahBlahBlah 71
w/terry fitzgerald
tdfitz@aol.com

Back again with more McFarlane related news. For those of you who have seen the Pearl Jam animated video on MTV or Much Music for the track "Do the Evolution", the artwork that you see was developed through a partnership of Todd McFarlane Entertainment and the Pearl Jam boys themselves.

Here's the story in a nutshell. PJ's label, Epic Records, has been asking for a video for awhile now. As Eddie Vedder tells it, the band is not really into the whole commercialization smash over excess viewing of a video clip, so they have been really reluctant to produce another video since the award winning "Jeremy" in 1992. While recording this album, "Yield", the guys saw this song as a potential video candidate that could tell a story about the evolution of this planet. The song is overflowing with visual imagery.

A few phone calls were made by the label and the next thing we knew we were having two hour long phone conversations with the directors, producers and Eddie himself. Todd directed the video with Kevin Altieri seen standing in the Rat Fink t-shirt in between Todd and Joe Pearson. Joe and I produced the piece.

After the phone calls produced the storyarc Joe and Kevin were asked to board and provide key art for the piece under Todd and Eddie's supervision. The actual animation was drawn overseas. I flew to a few different cities to show the band the storyboards while they were on tour to get their input on the visuals. They were more than accommodating and a couple of times we pored over the boards for hours on end. I thank them for being so great to work with and for letting me hang out during rehearsals backstage, etc.

Once the initial animated footage arrived here in the US, Joe and Kevin assembled it in a rough edit. The band management and ourselves all made comments concerning the feel of the piece and another editing session was added. This time around, Todd and Eddie were present to assist in the final edit of the piece. After two days of editing, the final piece was assembled and this is what you see on TV. From initial phone call to final edit, the video was produced in a little over nine weeks. Thanks to all for all of the hard work.

As for the photos: the group shot pictures the band with a few McFarlane employees in a classic 1980's glam rock pose taken backstage in Phoenix, L to R: Stone Gossard, Todd, Jeff Ament, Eddie Vedder, John Gordon, myself, Matt Cameron, Mike McCready and in front showing mucho cleavage, Julia Simmons. The other two photos show Eddie with either myself, backstage in Phoenix, or with Todd during a break at the editing suite. (They took a break to play a little catch.)

Thanks again to the band for the opportunity of working with you guys. You have made one Canadian boy's dream come true.

—until next month and KORN . peace.
terry fitzgerald

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Curse Words
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We need current addresses for the following persons to return their items to them. Please send your new addresses in to the attention of Melanie Simmons. Thank you.

Brannon Gannaway
Renatto Del Toro
Casey Landreth formerly of Phoenix, Arizona
Pat Mettarney formerly of Scottsdale, Arizona
Brad Kobryn formerly of High Point, North Carolina
W. Thomas Smith formerly of Tabor City, North Carolina
Mitchell Rivera formerly of Coram, New York
John Gibson formerly of Huntsville, Alabama
Sung Choi formerly of S. Windsor, Connecticut
Ron Ganjeh
Mr. Wingert of South Carolina
Dave Hanson formerly of Durango, Colorado
Ty Fletcher formerly of Lyons, Kansas
Justin Cooley formerly of Ottawa, Kansas
James Q Manning formerly of Crockett, Texas

Dear Mr. McFarlane

The purpose of this communication is to introduce myself and to briefly present the basic outline for a project to design, publish and distribute comic books for use in education.

I have been an educator for over 20 years. My career began as a classroom teacher. I then advanced to specialize in the area of teaching "at risk" students. My present position is that of Director of State and Federal Programs which includes the federally funded Head Start and Title 1 programs. This position allows me to develop and monitor curriculum designed to help high-risk students succeed in school. Educators today agree that the most important factor in student achievement is MOTIVATION! Thus, I believe that at risk students would choose to read comic books written for them. Watered down versions of existing comic books that would be safe for education would not be accepted by children. Therefore, I propose all-new series' aimed at specific age groups. The result would be improved communication skills due to interest and practice. Children still like comic books and I think we can agree that lack of exposure to interesting reading material is the true problem.

A recent issue of Reading Today magazine, published and distributed to thousands of members of the International Reading Association, suggests that comics can help motivate reluctant readers. The article does not suggest a source for the comics or a way to utilize them in the classroom. The idea caught my attention for two reasons: a.) I investigate any possible way to help at risk learners and b.) My son Matt Nixon writes comic books (Conan: the Return of Styrm). He brought to my attention your challenges from Wizard magazine and Curse of Spawn #22. Again, I agree when you say that the issue of a massive educational system shift is the problem and I would like to explore a way to solve this puzzle.

The question then becomes: "How do we help educators realize they need comics in education?." I believe I am in an excellent position to test the waters in search of an answer. For the past several years I have been a featured speaker at a variety of educational conferences. I speak about motivating reluctant readers by implementing sound teaching strategies and using suitable materials that will engage students. I have been invited to speak throughout the Midwest as well as at International Conferences in Washington DC, Texas, Florida and Canada. Suppliers of educational materials can display at these conferences by purchasing a booth from the sponsoring organization. The exposure from my presentations and the display booths are all the marketing needed to initially create an interest in the product.

I am interested in hearing your thoughts on these matters.

Sincerely,
Donna M. Fox
Director of State and Federal Programs
Michigan

First off, I appreciate your letter and concern you have with trying to tackle the tough question of whether we can change a very stodgy system; a system that would potentially expand itself and endorse the kind of reading material that might make a direct impact on a young person's life. At the end of your letter you said you'd be interested in hearing my thoughts on these matters. I could make a couple of broad strokes but then again I don't live in the educational system, although my wife used to teach high school earlier in her career. I'd be more inclined to see if you could give me a follow up letter that got into specifics instead of the generalities that you started here in this conversation. It's always easier for me to react to people's opinions and facts once I see them in front of me. For me to go out on a limb and see if I could potentially put together a plan of attack given that I don't live in that system, would be fairly foolish on my part. A person, such as yourself, who has learned and watched what has gone on around you and dealt with the different individuals and the politics within the system would have a better understanding of what those specifics would be. If you want to send me a follow-up letter, I would be more than happy to respond to your specifics. I can then get into the generalities of what we're trying to accomplish as a whole and the actual reality if any of this could actually be accomplished.

Posting from the message board on the Spawn Web Site

Yes it is true. I just received word from the Spawn Mailing List that Curse of the Spawn is indeed going to become a Sam & Twitch book. They will either start COTS out with a new #1 or change the title with a new #1, but I don't believe that there will be no more COTS.

As of my standing with reading Spawn comics, I don't know if I am going to continue to read them. Most likely I will give it 'til next summer and if it is no better by then, then you can say goodbye to Jae Thomas.

As to my reaction to this, I am very, VERY angry. How many people

posted on here that they didn t like the idea of chang ng COTS Wa t one second, let me go check that. There were 20, yes 20, replies to the post made by Beth Broeker A l of wh ch were opposed to the dea Now I don't know who is sending these so-called etters saying COTS sucks and Sam & Twitch should take over, but what I suspect is that a lot of peop e sent etters in say ng that they like the Sam & Twitch story line

How many peop e gave a $#!# that Sam and Tw tch were in that story ine? I sure as he d don't. I read it for Suture It could have been Garfield the Cat trying to track Suture. The star of the story was Suture!

Now as to the Curse of the Spawn dying, that is a shame Curse of the Spawn was created to spot ight the curse of the Spawn and how it reached into the lives of those living with the current, past and future HellSpawns. It helped to give the Spawn mythos a backbone, to support the ackuster story that was put forth in Spawn each month. We were going to finally f gure out things about our favorite characters that we would have never known about them. We were going to learn about the curse of the Spawn. But now, we are go ng to watch a fat guy and a skinny guy rip off the movie Seven

Let me say to Todd McFar ane, although there is a snowball's chance in hell that this will ever reach his eyes, he has made another b g mistake. He took away the last thing in the Spawn mythos that sti retained its integrity You have screwed your own creation

Jae Thomas

First off you have to understand a couple of things from our point of view. Whenever you have a book being published, those that are still buying the book always oppose change because they are the ones that basically like what you are doing. The question as to why I would potentially make a change in the future with the Curse of the Spawn, was not brought on by those that are still reading the comic book. It is more about the (literally) tens of thousands of people that are no longer reading the comic book that were a few short years ago. I can sit there and say I'm gonna make sure that I'm going to stay very, very loyal to those that are still buying the book because essentially you are most important in terms of keeping the book going and are the ones that plunk down your hard earned cash. But to not acknowledge the fact that the readership has walked away from this book and not do anything about it is also equally foolish. I have to assume there is a reason that people have stopped buying the book. The reason they stopped buying the book was because, in my way of thinking, there is a bit of a scatter gun feel to this title in that it doesn't really belong to any one person. Could I give it to another Spawn? Sure I could, but again that was never the intent of this book.

Something that is very hard for me to try to get through to the comic book community is that right now there are literally hundreds of thousands of people reading comic books in this country. The last time I checked the census, there are 260 million people that live in this country so that having a couple of hundred thousand people every month come in to comic book stores and buy the product does not mean we're doing a good job. Actually, it is quite the contrary. If we had say 20, 30, 40, 50 million people buying comic books then one in every five people that live in this country is reading comics and I'm saying that as a collective whole in this industry. Instead we have a fraction of one percent that even acknowledge the existence of comic books and they are always seen as these little bastard entertainment products that nobody pays any legitimate interest to.

Now I'm saying that from a public perception and from a stereotype that has now been built into the minds of people who don't read comic books. My goal is to not sit here and stagnate within the confines of an ever shrinking marketplace because that potentially becomes a suicide chair. I want to see if there is a way we can change and evolve what we present so it might appeal to those other 264 million people who are not reading comic books. We need to spark their interest. That's all the conversation is about.

In terms of saying you don't think there is an interest in having detectives run around and solve cases, obviously you've never met anybody that was a fan of Hillstreet Blues and now currently NYPD Blue. Both of those shows are episodic and deal with drama and suspense and have literally tens of millions of people come back and see them week after week. I'm not saying I want to copy what Hollywood is doing per se. I'm just trying to see if there is a way I can present stories that once you turn past the age of 13 or 14 you don't outgrow them and move on to other things and leave behind the comic book industry. Where I sit, it s called diversity. I hope I can bring some of that into the comic book market while I continue to do some of the things I do with Spawn. Thanks for your input anyway.

Dear Curse Words

I am writ ng in response to your comment in issue #21, regard ng turning the Curse of the Spawn into a Sam and Tw tch oriented book. My answer is yes, but only if you handle th ngs carefu ly

First y, Sam and Twitch feature quite prominently in Spawn. If they got a regular g g in COTS, then their involvement in Spawn wou d have to be scaled down to avoid continu ty errors and to keep max mum ideas for Curse

This eads to my second point· orig na ity The stories in Curse of the Spawn wou d have to be fresh and varied Ways to do this could include spending a few issues exp oring Twitch's home life (what h s re ationship with h's wife and k ds are like), following a day in the l fe of Sam and Twitch, or even delving in Sam and Twitch's pasts

F nally, since Curse of the Spawn was orig nally a showcase book, Sam and Tw tch shou d cross paths with supporting characters like Wynn, Tony Twist and the Fitzgeralds regularly. These characters st l need exposure (when was the last time we say any of them in the regular book?) A so, why not introduce an-new regular characters into Curse? Sam and Twitch would need to have a support ng cast

Lastly I'd just like to congratulate Alan, Dwayne, Chance, Danny and everyone else on producing one of the best com cs in the business. The story especially is of a very high caliber. To a those people saying that the book is too wordy: "you have a bra n, use it! It s a com c with detailed stories. That's a good thing!"

Yours,
Daniel Stapleton
Canberra, Australia

Now we get the point where we have letters that have the opposite views of each other if you've read the previous letter from Jae Thomas. In this reader's opinion, moving towards Sam and Twitch would just continue to expand what he likes about the Spawn world and would like to see some of the characters that have been flushed out in the regular monthly book and now in the Curse. I foresee that we'll be doing all the things suggested in this book in the future and at the same time possibly having Spawn cross over, too. I'm not all that concerned over the continuity and whether it will work one way or the other.

There are literally a myriad of story ideas that can pop out of New York City where all of these people live right now. From the true-to-l fe stories you could read about in the New York Times and combine those with the fantasy elements of the comic books. My guess is we can have our cake and eat it too. For those who seem to be a little disrupted about whether a Sam and Twitch book is going to be a boring cops and robbers book, we can keep all the elements that have been successful in the Curse book so far. We'll see if somewhere along the line we can't put out the new books and maybe get an update from both Daniel and Jae

Also, let me reiterate that the transition from the Curse book to the Sam and Twitch book is literally going to take half a year and we've got a couple of surprises up our sleeves. Stay tuned to this book and the regular Spawn book for all the insight into what we'll be rolling out for our comics. We'll be adding other books like the Crow and our new Black Terror coming in 1999. Our expansion will not just be shifting this title to another book but actually expanding to five regular series books by 1999. Thanks

endcap

7

6

MOVIE MANIACS:

The lights go down, the screen starts to flicker, and suddenly you're drawn into a world of horror. It's a world of screams, scares, and shocks. Now the greatest terrors of the cinema step off the silver screen and into the toy aisles. McFarlane's *Movie Maniacs* line will set another standard, this time with evil icons from the past twenty years of film. All figures in this assortment come with a special marquee-display holding a poster to commemorate the infamy of each character. Also, four of the five figures will be available in both PG and PG-13 versions, depending on what store you purchase them from.

Jason Voorhees, from the "Friday the 13th" series, is the first figure in the assortment. This New Line Cinema character comes with all the implements of terror he needs: a pike, machete, and ax. And let's not forget the removable hockey mask! When added to his ten points of articulation, Jason is an incredibly posable figure, just waiting to be added to your collection (or proudly displayed at the office).

Freddy Krueger from the "Nightmare on Elm Street" series is the next McFarlane maniac. Like Jason, he'll come in a "before and after" slaughter version. He's also packed with a special miniature Freddy figure, as seen in the upcoming *Jason vs. Freddy* movie. The likeness to the demon of dreams is incredible.

"The Texas Chainsaw Massacre" is next. Our version of *Leatherface* from the first movie is of course packaged with the obligatory chainsaw and hammer. Available in a tame and gory version, he also has a nice bucket filled with parts, including a head that looks suspiciously like the face of the sculptor! Talk about throwing yourself into your work!

Eve from "Species 2" is also in the assortment. This female fury from beyond the stars has a whopping 11 points of articulation! She will be made in both the relax and attack modes that feature different chests and heads. Watch out for her spikes!

The fifth and final figure in the first *Movie Maniacs* line is also from "Species 2." *Patrick* was the male alien and stands over 8 inches tall! He can also fold down to an all-fours stance, where he still looms over the other figures.

The figures are scheduled to be out in October, just in time for Halloween. Of course, the terror will continue beyond the holiday. There are always the sequels....and we'd like your input on that. See the contest on the following page for details on how YOU can help decide which figures we make next!

Now to the mailbag: Manuel B. Gamboa Jr. from Singapore mentioned that over there, Toys R Us is only selling the Dark Ages (Series 11) as a set and not individually! At least they're pricing the set at a little lower cost to make up for it. Manuel also wanted to know about Spawn/Violator smaller boxed figures. Those limited edition sets were made both in color and in a "pewter" version in 1994. Not really "action" figures, the PVC sets were numbered and one of the first products made by us.

Stoneage@we.net mentioned how much he (?) would like to see more toys done up in the classic 1980s style, down to the package art and weapons. Sorry to disappoint you, but we're not even trying to do figures in the 90s style anymore. We're pushing the industry forward into the next millennium, and have no desire to do things "simpler and cleaner." Todd is busy blazing a trail, and many other companies are starting to follow, but he doesn't look back to see what they're doing. He has some big plans yet, as you will see in the next few years.

Octavio Haro of Huntington Beach, California asked if there are any plans to make a "Hamburger Head" version of *Spawn III*. In fact, there is. Coming soon to KayBee stores will be a redecorated version of *Spawn III*. He'll have a rubber flowing cape that is out of this world, along with a screaming unmasked face and long metal chains. Also in stores in the next month or so will be a *Spiked Spawn* with extra chains and a bat-filled base at Target, *Poacher* in a different color with a gun through FAO Schwarz, *Goddess* with new wings and metallized parts available solely through Wal-Mart, and a metallized *Manga Spawn* with a shooting hand weapon only sold in Toys-R-US. All these exclusive figures come in a special stackable exhibit case that enhances the collectability of these toys, along with making a really cool display.

Winner of the Free *Green Cosmic Angels* this month: Matt Price for his picture of Sumo Clown.

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YOU BE THE DIRECTOR
YOU CAST THE NEXT MANIAC!

IN OCTOBER, MCFARLANE TOYS BRINGS CINEMA'S MOST FEARED MANIACS TO LIFE!

LAUNCHING WITH NEW LINE CINEMA'S TWO MOST FAMOUS HORROR VILLAINS, FREDDY KRUEGER FROM A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET AND JASON FROM FRIDAY THE 13TH, THE FIRST ASSORTMENT ALSO INCLUDES EVE AND PATRICK FROM SPECIES II AND LEATHERFACE FROM TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE.

WE'RE WORKING ON SERIES II AND WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU. WHAT HORROR VILLAIN WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AS A MCFARLANE TOY?

Fill out the entry form below and send it in. What do you get? A chance to win one of the following:

GRAND PRIZE (1): One lucky horror fan will get a complete set of all six Freddy Krueger movies, all eight Jason Nicks, both Species movies, and the trio of Texas Chainsaw Massacres. They'll come on VHS so make sure you've got your VCR ready.

FIRST PRIZE (2): Two runners-up will receive a complete set of Movie Maniacs - Series One action figures. All 4 figures will be signed by Todd McFarlane.

SECOND PRIZE (5): Five horror fans will get an action figure from Movie Maniacs - Series One.

Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone Number (with area code) _____

Movie Maniacs - Series II should include _____

Contest Rules: No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Todd McFarlane, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, New Line Productions, and their immediate families. Print your name, date of birth, address, city, state, zip and telephone number with area code on the official entry form or a 3" by 5" index card. One entry per person. Mail your entry to: **MOVIE MANIACS CONTEST, P.O. Box 27228, Tempe, AZ 85285-7228.** All entries become the property of Todd McFarlane Productions and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. Prizes are awarded in the name of the contest winners and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purposes and rules hereof. **All entries must be received by November 30, 1998.** Todd McFarlane Productions is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries. Winners will be selected at random by Todd McFarlane Productions. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest.

MOVIE Maniacs™

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Creative Profile

CHANCE WOLF

Last month I was forced to spend time with "Happy Andy" Frank from our McFarlane Toys design office. I have finally washed my hands enough to throw myself back into the arena of playing questions and answers with another one of our young creative lions. This month I'm slinging questions at artist, magician and rock-star-in-his-own-mind, Chance Wolf. Last year at the San Diego convention, "Tight-Wad" Todd McFarlane, our own "Postal" office General, made me flunk a few nights with Chance. There is not enough space here to describe the experience of sharing space with Mr. Wolf. At least he brought his own litter box. Let's get started with a few questions all of you are dying to have answered by ol' Chance.

Ok, what's the deal with the name? Fill us in on what pulp novel your parents got it from.

Well, originally I was led to believe my conception was during a hot and heavy game of Monopoly. However, the truth is my mom lifted my name from an old western starring Paul Newman. Of course, she was at the drive-in at the time.

How old are you?

...as young as I have to be to date. I was born [illegible] in the toxic wastelands of Tri-Cities Washington.

What's your current base of operations? I promise not to tell the IRS.

Hell!! I'm living in 118 degrees of Hell! Phoenix Arizona, for those of you who haven't spent a summer here.

What's your occupation at the McFarlane Empire?

I've come to consider myself as Todd's spare parts man. Other than inker for Curse of the Spawn, I handle a lot of Todd's extra art chores such as painting action figure proto-types, convention booth design and construction, logo design and giving my opinion when necessary.

Ok, gimme the dirt...what's it like working with Todd McFarlane?

I guess my answer to this question will establish my job security. OK, let's see. Honestly, it has been an amazing learning experience from more aspects than just inking. I spent roughly a year working in Todd's home office assisting with the Spawn comic and listening to Todd--and he's usually right about nine out of ten times. He's really helped me a lot with my approach to my work as well as my outlook on the business in general.

Have you ever had the urge to throttle other people ahead of you in a line?

Yes!! Usually it's the guy who's got about seven price checks in his cart who didn't have the common sense to grab the items with the little stickers on them in the first place!!

What letter does your favorite cuss word begin and end with?

F___Y. Is that a cuss word?

What kind of music other than Hanson do you listen to when you work?

Other than Hanson!? You mean there's more out there?! Seriously, I've fallen into the trend of women in Rock. Currently I'm listening to Natalie Imbruglia. Cute girl with some good hooks. What else do ya need!?

What was your favorite comic book when you were growing up?

Spiderman, back in the seventies when the stories were somewhat believable and the writers gave a shit. The entire series starting with the jacket and the "original" cloning of Gwen Stacy and Peter Parker was brilliant. The foreshadowing, build-up and finale was great. Too bad twenty years later someone had to come along and screw it up!

Other than any Todd McFarlane Production Comic book, what is your current favorite?

If I want to have fun and read cool stories, it is none other than Erik Larsen, and spell his name right!? If I want to look at the pretty pictures, I have to follow the pack and say Michael Turner.

If you could force any actress or celebrity to be your girlfriend who would it be?

Let's just begin by saying I never would force a woman on to me. I've found that luring her in with one dollar bill at a time works just fine. However, to answer your question, it's a toss-up between Cameron Diaz or Miss Hathaway from the Beverly Hillbillies. I think I'd have a better shot at Cameron, though. After all, Matt Dillon is getting old. So, I figure if I quit smoking and work out, I could probably kick his ass, steal Cameron and sit her down for my puppet show.

Here's a question that'll make me laugh--What was the last book you read...without any help?

Pet Sematary, by Stephen King. That book scared the hell out of me.

If you were elected President of The United States what would be the first scandal you would be involved in?

Well, the current man in office has pretty much used them all up so I guess that just leaves wait, yeah, I got it. How about I tell the truth. Stay loyal to my wife and not have interns bury the white house floor with their knee pads! Yeah that's it! Now that's a scandal.

What is your favorite sport and team?

Uh...[illegible]...uh...what?

What annoying celebrity would you like to smack around with a tire iron?

That dude from Mad About You Paul Reiser!! God, what an annoying pain in the ass he must be in real life.

What do you do in your free time that you can mention in this so called family publication?

I'm still chasing the fantasy of pursuing a career in magic someday. Other than that...same crap everyone else does, just less of it because I'm always working! Sorry, Beau. Do I seem a bit stressed?

If you could be really good looking who would you like to look like?

IF!!? Man, that question just blew about $5000 worth of [illegible] therapy! I would have to be Matt Dillon because then I would have Cameron Diaz.

How many times a day do you dream of being like Beau Smith?

Man, this is getting creepy! I...I feel all dirty now. Excuse me, I gotta go take a shower...

Leave our readers with some words of wisdom from Chance Wolf...

Words of wisdom from the all-knowing Shamalo-woo...If you suffer from a lack of attention or have an incredibly large ego, then don't become an inker, if she says she's 18, ask for her I.D., and most of all, call your mom at least once a week and tell her that you love her. Otherwise, she may think you're better growing up with a funny name. Peace.

That's it for this month. Next time we'll throw the lock off another cage and let another member of our creative brain trust into your home. You have been warned.

--Beau Smith,
Abnormal Investigator

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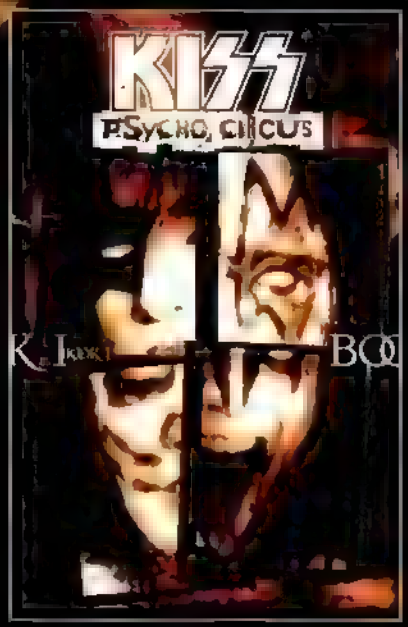
Discover the true essence of KISS. Join the Demon, the Starbearer, the Beast King and the Celestial and travel with the Carnival of the Damned on a journey into the macabre.

KISS Psycho Circus Book One collects the first six issues of the sold out comic book from Todd McFarlane Productions.

This special edition includes an introduction by Gene Simmons, a peek at artist Angel Medina's sketchbook, and bios on the Psycho Circus comic book creators.

Available in September at Border's, Barnes & Noble and comic stores nationwide.



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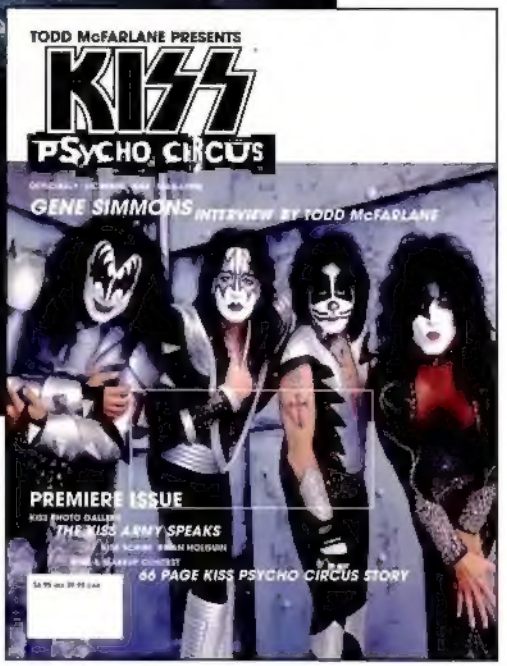

KISS PSYCHO CIRCUS.

The New 104 page magazine from Todd McFarlane Productions.

COMING THIS OCTOBER.

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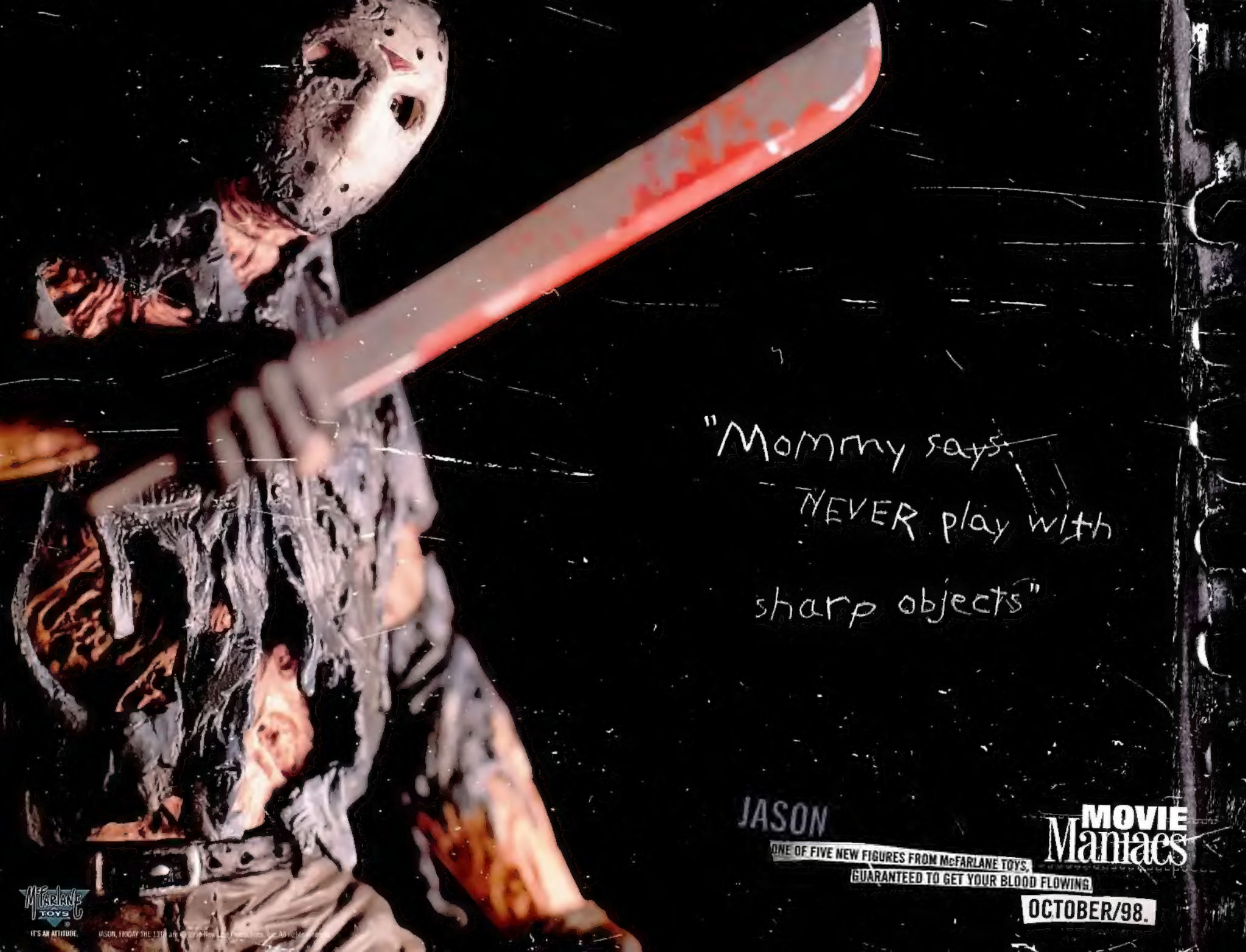
"Mommy says
NEVER play with
sharp objects"
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DarthScanner

DMT